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PRESS RELEASE

D-8 ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION

D-8 SECRETARY-GENERAL PARTICIPATES IN 10TH TRT WORLD FORUM AND MEETS MALAYSIAN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER IN ISTANBUL

At the invitation of TRT World, the Secretary-General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), H.E. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, participated in the 10th edition of the TRT World Forum, held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 6-7 November 2026, under the theme *"A World Without a Center: Who Leads When the Rules Run Out?"*

Marking a decade of international dialogue, the Forum was inaugurated by H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye, and brought together high-level political leaders, policymakers, diplomats, academics, media representatives, and experts from around the world. Separate sessions addressed a broad range of subjects -- including the evolving international system; Türkiye's role as a multi-regional actor; conflicts in the Middle East and Europe; regional security dynamics and emerging security architectures; the geo-politics of connectivity; global economic headwinds and impacts of energy crisis; challenges and opportunities presented by emerging technologies; and the imperatives of renewed international cooperation.

On the sidelines of the Forum, the Secretary-General had a high-level bilateral meeting with H.E. Dato' Seri Dr. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Rural and Regional Development of Malaysia. The meeting provided an opportunity to highlight Malaysia's long-standing contributions to the D-8 process and exchange views on further strengthening cooperation within the Organization.

Secretary-General Sohail Mahmood appreciated Malaysia's active role as a founding Member of the D-8 and its continued support for the Organization's objectives and institutional development. He particularly stressed the importance of benefitting from Malaysia's economic strengths, experiences, and best practices in advancing the D-8 cooperation agenda.

The discussions focused on enhancing intra-D-8 trade and investment, strengthening financial connectivity, addressing non-tariff barriers, and promoting greater private-sector engagement. Both sides also explored opportunities for practical cooperation in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), food security, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and rural development, with particular emphasis on entrepreneurship, skills development, and inclusive economic growth.

H.E. Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Zahid Hamidi proposed further strengthening cooperation in the halal economy and trade, while also exploring opportunities for collaboration through the International Zakat Organisation (IZO) to promote poverty alleviation, socio-economic empowerment, and inclusive development.

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The Secretary-General highlighted the importance of accelerating implementation of the D-8 Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) and translating the priorities of the D-8 Decennial Roadmap 2020-2030 into tangible outcomes, especially the target of raising intra-D-8 trade to US$500 billion by 2030. He also emphasized the potential for closer economic linkages between the D-8 and ASEAN, building on Malaysia's strategic position and regional connectivity.

Looking ahead, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood underscored the importance of sustained high-level engagement by Member States, the forthcoming 12th D-8 Summit in Indonesia, and the Organization's 30th anniversary in 2027, as important opportunities to advance collective priorities and strengthen the D-8's role and international profile.

During the course of the 2-day Forum, the Secretary-General also had the opportunity to briefly interact with several participating dignitaries, including H.E. Hakan Fidan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye; H.E. Mehmet Fatih Kacır, Minister of Industry and Technology of Türkiye; H.R.H. Prince Turki Al-Faisal Al Saud, Chairman of the Board of the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies; H.E. Mohammed Idris Malagi, Minister of Information and National Orientation of Nigeria; and H.E. Dr. Grace Naledi Pandor, former Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa and Chair of the Nelson Mandela Foundation. These interactions provided valuable opportunities to broaden the D-8's international engagement and outreach.

The Secretary-General's participation in the TRT World Forum and his engagements with senior dignitaries reflected the D-8 Organization's continued efforts to strengthen international partnerships, promote multilateral dialogue, and advance the core objectives of economic cooperation, sustainable development, and shared prosperity.



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